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Executive Secretary

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7572

S E C R E T MANILA 36562

NODIS

FOR ARMACOST AND SIGUR FROM AMBASSADOR

E. O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV, RP

SUBJECT: PROPOSED MEETING WITH PRESIDENT AQUINO

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REF: STATE 353511

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. PRESIDENT AQUINO RETURNS THIS EVENING FROM WHAT LOOKS TO HAVE BEEN A SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO JAPAN. SHE COMES BACK TO A SITUATION WHICH MAY APPEAR SOMEWHAT CALMER THAN THE ONE SHE LEFT ON MONDAY MORNING. BUT THE UNDERLYING POLITICAL SITUATION REMAINS CRITICAL.

3. WE MAY NEVER KNOW ALL THE FACTS OF THE EVENTS AND NON-EVENTS OF THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS. BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT, DESPITE THE DISAVOWALS AND PUBLIC EXPLANATIONS OF THE PAST TWO DAYS, THERE WAS AN ATTEMPT BY MND OFFICERS CLOSE TO ENRILE TO GAIN SUPPORT ELSEWHERE IN THE NAEP FOR MILITARY ACTION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT. THEIR ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE WAS TO DISLODGE OR PUSH ASIDE MRS. AQUINO AND INSTALL ENRILE AS THE DE FACTO HEAD OF GOVERNMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT THESE OFFICERS WERE ACTING UNDER THE

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DIRECTION OF ENRILE HIMSELF. (MORE IMPORTANTLY, MOST FILIPINOS BELIEVE ENRILE WAS BOTH WITTING AND COMPLICITOUS).

4. IN OUR JUDGEMENT, PRESIDENT AQUINO NOW FACES AN URGENT NEED TO RESPOND TO THIS SITUATION. THE UNIFORMED MILITARY WENT THROUGH AGONY LAST WEEK AND OVER THE WEEKEND AS THEY WERE TORN BY COMPETING LOYALTIES. THEY FACED THE REAL SPECTRE OF SOLDIERS FIGHTING SOLDIERS. UNDER RAMOS' CAREFUL LEADERSHIP, THE OFFICER CORPS CAME DOWN IN SUPPORT OF THE PRESIDENT AND PRESERVED THE FORMAL CHAIN OF COMMAND. BUT IT IS FAR FROM CERTAIN THAT WE WOULD SEE THE SAME RESULT IF THE NAFP WERE CONFRONTED WITH ANOTHER ROUND, OR ROUNDS, OF CRISIS. ENRILE AND HIS RAM'S HAVE DRAWN BACK, BUT WE SEE LITTLE SIGN THAT THEY HAVE GIVEN UP. INDEED, IN HIS WEDNESDAY MEETING WITH ME, ENRILE SEEMED UNSURE OF HIS NEXT STEPS BUT DETERMINED TO PERSEVERE. MOREOVER, RAMOS' HOLD OVER THINGS IS FAR FROM ABSOLUTE.

5. AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE BEGINNING TO SEE EVIDENCE OF A MARKED WEAKENING OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN MRS. AQUINO'S LEADERSHIP, INCLUDING WITHIN THE MODERN BUSINESS CLASS WHICH HAS BEEN ONE OF HER STRONGEST PILLARS OF SUPPORT. THE MAJORITY CONDEMNS ENRILE AND HIS AMBITION. BUT QUESTIONS WHY THE PRESIDENT DOES NOT SEIZE THE INITIATIVE.

6. UNTIL THIS LATEST ROUND OF CRISIS, MRS. AQUINO MAINTAINED SHE WANTED TO KEEP ENRILE IN THE GOVERNMENT. AT LEAST UNTIL THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM AND PERHAPS UNTIL THE MAY CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS. TO THIS END, SHE HAS BEEN WILLING TO MAKE SOME CONCESSIONS TO HIS PUBLIC DEMANDS, E.G., A TOUGHER STANCE TOWARD THE INSURGENCY.

OICS, ETC. AT EACH STAGE, HOWEVER, ENRILE HAS EITHER UPPED THE ANTE OR SHIFTED TO DEMANDS WHICH HE KNOWS MRS.

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AQUINO CANNOT POSSIBLY ACCOMMODATE, E.G. A RETURN TO THE
1973 CONSTITUTION, ETC.

7. JUST BEFORE MRS. AQUINO LEFT FOR JAPAN, WE HAD A RELIABLE REPORT FROM LOCSIN THAT SHE HAD CONCLUDED SHE COULD TEMPORIZE NO LONGER AND MUST SEIZE THE INITIATIVE. ACCORDING TO LOCSIN, SHE PLANNED TO GET RID OF SEVERAL CIVILIAN MINISTERS, TELL ENRILE HE MUST GO, ADOPT ARMY CHIEF CANIESO'S PLAN FOR MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST THE NPA IN SELECTED REGIONS, AND REORGANIZE PALACE MANAGEMENT. (THIS IS ROUGHLY THE SCENARIO WHICH A FEW OF MRS. AQUINO'S CLOSEST ADVISORS OUTSIDE THE PALACE HAVE BEEN QUIETLY DISCUSSING WITH ME FOR THE PAST COUPLE OF WEEKS.) I VERY MUCH HOPE SHE REMAINS DETERMINED TO ACT ALONG THESE GENERAL LINES WHEN SHE RETURNS.

8. BUT THE IMMEDIATE COUP CRISIS HAS BEEN DEFUSED, AND GIVEN THE NON-CONFRONTATIONAL CULTURE OF THIS PLACE, I AM CONCERNED THAT SHE MAY BE TEMPTED TO CONTINUE TO TRY TO HOLD THINGS TOGETHER AS THEY ARE UNTIL AFTER THE REFERENDUM. THERE ARE ALREADY SOME SIGNS THAT CERTAIN OF HER ADVISORS WILL COUNSEL THIS APPROACH, E.G. ARROYO'S PUBLICIZED CALL ON ENRILE YESTERDAY AND SAGUISAG'S COMMENTS TO ONE OF OUR POLITICAL OFFICERS TODAY (SEE SEPTEL).

9. I DO NOT BELIEVE, IN THE AFTERMATH OF WHAT IS WIDELY SEEN AS A BARELY AVERTED COUP ATTEMPT, THAT THIS

MUDDLE-THROUGH SCENARIO IS ANY LONGER TENABLE. I DON'T THINK ENRILE CAN BE COOPTED OR TRANQUILIZED. HE IS TOUGH, AND I FEAR THAT HIS REACTION TO FURTHER TEMPORIZING BY MRS. AQUINO WILL BE SIMPLY TO COME BACK ON THE ATTACK. WITH THE PRESIDENT INCREASINGLY PERCEIVED AS VACILLATING

AND INDECISIVE. IT WILL BE HARDER AND HARDER FOR RAMOS TO HOLD THE MILITARY. AT THE SAME TIME, ECONOMIC RECOVERY.

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WHICH CLEARLY HAD BEGUN IN THE THIRD QUARTER, WILL STALL;
THE EXTERNAL FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WILL BEGIN TO FRAY;
AND THE PRESIDENT WILL LOSE A SIGNIFICANT MARGIN OF HER
POPULAR SUPPORT.

10. SHOULD THE PRESIDENT ALSO AUTHORIZE MITRA TO CONCLUDE
A CEASEFIRE ACCORD WITH THE COMMUNISTS UPON HER RETURN,
THE BALANCE OF OPINION AMONG MILITARY LEADERS COULD SHIFT
TOWARDS ENRILE AND AWAY FROM RAMOS. INDEED, EVEN RAMOS
AND CANIESO COULD SHIFT THEIR POSITIONS AT THIS TIME,
GIVEN THEIR STRONG PROPENSITY FOR KEEPING THE ARMED FORCES
UNITED.

11. THEREFORE, I PROPOSE TO MEET WITH MRS. AQUINO AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE. I WILL DRAW ON THE ABOVE ANALYSIS AND THE
TALKING POINTS PROVIDED FOR JOHN MONJO'S CONVERSATION WITH
GOP CABINET MINISTERS IN TOKYO. I WILL TRY TO STAY AWAY
FROM THE SPECIFICS OF WHAT SHE SHOULD DO, BUT I WILL MAKE
THE POINT THAT IN OUR JUDGEMENT SHE MUST ACT DECISIVELY IF
SHE IS TO REMAIN IN CONTROL OF EVENTS.

12. IN THE EVENT THAT SHE ASKS ME TO BE MORE SPECIFIC,
PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO WHAT SHE SHOULD DO ABOUT
ENRILE (WHICH SHE JUST MIGHT DO), I WOULD PLAN TO REPLY
ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

-- IT WOULD SEEM TO US THAT SHE NEEDS A STRATEGY WHICH
ADDRESSES ALL HER MAJOR PROBLEMS: THE COUNTERINSURGENCY
EFFORT, DECISIONS ON THE MILITARY, THE APPARENTLY
UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCES OF SOME CABINET MINISTERS,
ENRILE, AND PALACE MANAGEMENT.

-- GIVEN THE CRITICAL NEED TO HOLD THE CENTER TOGETHER, IN
THE MILITARY AND IN THE COUNTRY, THERE SHOULD BE SOME
SYMMETRY IN ANY CABINET REVAMP, I.E. "NON-PERFORMING"
CIVILIANS SHOULD GO AS WELL.

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-- WHETHER SHE CAN SIMPLY ASK ENRILE TO RESIGN. OR MUST
FIRE HIM, IS A JUDGEMENT ONLY SHE, IN CLOSE CONSULTATION
WITH RAMOS, CAN MAKE.

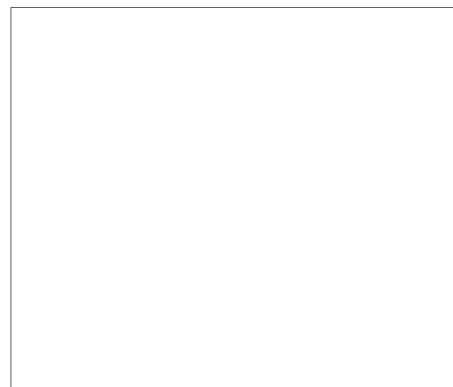
-- AN ALTERNATIVE MIGHT BE TO MAKE SUPPORT FOR THE NEW
CONSTITUTION THE MAKE OR BREAK ISSUE WITH ENRILE. IF HE
WERE TO SUPPORT THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND STAY, HE WOULD
APPEAR TO BE COOPTED, AND SOMEWHAT LESS DANGEROUS, AT
LEAST FOR NOW.

12. I AM VERY RELUCTANT TO GET INTO THE POSITION OF
GIVING THE PRESIDENT THIS SORT OF ADVISE. ON THE OTHER
HAND, OUR ANALYSIS OF HER PROBLEMS AND THE GRAVITY OF THE
CURRENT SITUATION IS, I BELIEVE, SHARED BY A BROAD CROSS
SECTION OF THE COUNTRY. GIVEN OUR ROLE AND INTERESTS HERE
I THINK WE CAN LEGITIMATELY REINFORCE THE SORT OF ANALYSIS
AND ADVICE I KNOW SHE IS RECEIVING FROM FILIPINOS.

13. I WOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS YOU
MIGHT HAVE. BOSWORTH

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TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 355623

NODIS

FOR AMB BOSWORTH FROM ASEC SIGUR; BANGKOK FOR DAS MONJO ON

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, US, RP

SUBJECT: YOUR MEETING WITH PRESIDENT AQUINO

25X1

REF: (A) MANILA 36562, (B) TOKYO 21319

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. WE ARE PLEASED THAT YOU WILL BE SEEKING AN EARLY APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT AQUINO. THE APPROACH YOU OUTLINE (PARA 11 REFTEL A) AND YOUR SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS (PARA 12) COMPORT ENTIRELY WITH OUR OWN VIEW OF WHAT TO SAY TO PRESIDENT AQUINO AT THIS JUNCTURE.

3. WE AGREE COMPLETELY THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT PRESIDENT AQUINO REGAIN THE INITIATIVE AND BE PERCEIVED BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD AS ACTING DECISIVELY. WE HAVE

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THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS WHICH YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER AS YOU PREPARE FOR YOUR MEETING.

4. WE THINK YOUR CONCERN THAT AQUINO MAY BE TEMPTED TO "MUDDLE THROUGH" NOW THAT SHE HAS HAD A SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO TOKYO AND THE COUP THREAT APPEARS TO HAVE RECEDED IS VERY REAL. IF AQUINO GIVES SIGNS OF THINKING THIS IS A VIABLE STRATEGY, WE HOPE YOU CAN DISABUSE HER OF THIS VIEW. TIME IS NOT REPEAT NOT ON HER SIDE.

5. WE UNDERSTAND YOUR APPREHENSION ABOUT PROVIDING SPECIFIC ADVICE ON CABINET MEMBERS, PARTICULARLY ON ENRILE. WE AGREE THAT ENRILE CAN BE NEITHER CO-OPTED NOR TRANQUILIZED. HIS REACTION TO FURTHER VACILLATION ON AQUINO'S PART WILL BE SIMPLY TO PUSH HARDER. ENRILE HINTED HE MIGHT DECIDE TO LEAVE THE CABINET, BUT WE EXPECT HE WILL CLING TO THE MND AS LONG AS HE CAN. WHILE LOCSIN HAS INDICATED THAT AQUINO MAY ASK FOR ENRILE'S RESIGNATION, WE NOTE REPORTS FROM TOKYO THAT SHE HAS INDICATED THAT SHE WANTS TO KEEP HIM IN THE CABINET. AS YOU RECOGNIZE, THIS IS A JUDGMENT ONLY SHE CAN MAKE. IT IS ALSO OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT RAMOS WANTS TO KEEP ENRILE IN THE GOVERNMENT. IF SHE DOES NOT DISMISS ENRILE (WHILE LETTING SOME LEFT-WING MINISTERS GO), IS THERE ANY WAY SHE AND RAMOS CAN SOMEHOW SEVER HIS CONNECTION WITH THE RAM MOVEMENT? IS THERE ANY WAY TO NEUTRALIZE THE RAMS?

6. ALTERNATIVELY, IF AQUINO ASKS ENRILE TO LEAVE HER CABINET AND HE AGREES, IS THERE ANY CONCEIVABLE WAY THAT HE COULD GO WHILE SOMEHOW STILL SAVING FACE? IT SEEMS TO US THAT IF SHE MADE SUPPORT FOR THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION THE LITMUS TEST OF CABINET MEMBERSHIP, HE COULD AT LEAST RESIGN ON GROUNDS OF PRINCIPLE AND OPPOSE IT IN THE

POLITICAL ARENA. BUT, FRANKLY, WE DOUBT ENRILE HAS APPETITE OR APTITUDE FOR A FAIR POLITICAL CONTEST.

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7. EVEN IF THE PRESENT TENSE SITUATION CALMS (AND THE OLALIA ASSASSINATION IS A NEW WORRISOME FACTOR), IT SEEMS TO US THAT TENSION WILL PROBABLY PERSIST UP TO THE PLEBISCITE AND POSSIBLY BEYOND. IN VIEW OF ONGPIN AND CONCEPCION'S COMMENTS TO DAS MONJO ABOUT REQUIREMENT FOR CONTINUING STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR AQUINO AND NEED TO GET OUR MESSAGE ACROSS ESPECIALLY TO THE MILITARY AND THE RAMS, WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR VIEW ON THE POSSIBLE UTILITY OF A SPECIAL EMISSARY WHO COULD REINFORCE OUR MESSAGE, PARTICULARLY WITH THE MILITARY, AND WHO WOULD ENSURE AQUINO OF HIGHEST LEVEL SUPPORT HERE FOR FIRM ACTION SHE MUST TAKE TO GAIN CONTROL OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN MANILA. SHULTZ

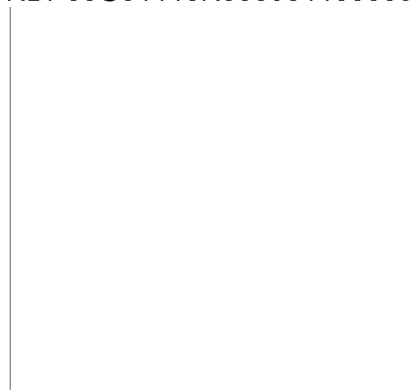
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3146

S E C R E T TOKYO 21319

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E. O. 12356: OADR
TAGS: RP, PGOV, PINS, US
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH ONGPIN AND CONCEPCION

REF: STATE 353511

1. (SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT).

2. SUMMARY: IN MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR MANSFIELD AND DAS MONJO, ONGPIN AND CONCEPCION EXPRESSED GUARDED OPTIMISM THAT RAMOS SUPPORT FOR AQUINO AND ENRILE'S BETTER JUDGEMENT WOULD PREVENT ANY RASH ACTION ON THE PART OF THE MILITARY. THE TWO PHILIPPINE MINISTERS SAID THAT THE US COULD MOST BE HELPFUL BY CONTINUING TO MAKE CLEAR OUR UNQUALIFIED SUPPORT FOR THE AQUINO GOVERNMENT TO ALL CONCERNED, PARTICULARLY ENRILE. THEY ALSO SAW MERIT IN JUDICIOUS STATEMENTS BY LEADING SENATE FIGURES SUCH AS SENATORS LUGAR AND GLENN. IN PARTING THEY EXPRESSED HOPE THAT AMBASSADOR BOSWORTH WOULD SEE PRESIDENT AQUINO SHORTLY AFTER HER RETURN. END SUMMARY.

3. AMBASSADOR MANSFIELD AND DAS MONJO MET EARLY

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MORNING NOVEMBER 13 WITH MINISTERS JIMMY ONGPIN AND JOE CONCEPCION WHO ARE IN TOKYO WITH PRESIDENT AQUINO. AFTER OPENING COURTESIES THE AMBASSADOR AND MONJO, DRAWING ON SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS REFTEL, EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES, STRESSED UNEQUIVOCAL US SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT AQUINO AND ASKED WHAT FURTHER STEPS WE COULD TAKE TO BE HELPFUL WHILE AVOIDING ANY APPEARANCE OF INTERFERENCE IN PHILIPPINE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS.

4. ONGPIN AND CONCEPCION EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE STEADY USG SUPPORT FOR THE AQUINO GOVERNMENT. THEY SAID THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE CONTINUE TO MAKE CLEAR TO ALL CONCERNED - ESPECIALLY ENRILE - THAT THE CONSEQUENCES OF ANY COUP ATTEMPT WOULD BE DISASTROUS FOR THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR U.S. - PHILIPPINE RELATIONS. ONGPIN SAID THAT HE FELT RAMOS WOULD BACK AQUINO WERE ENRILE TO TRY TO PULL SOMETHING OFF, BUT THEN ASKED CONCEPCION IF HE AGREED WITH THIS ESTIMATE. CONCEPCION SAID ON BALANCE HE DID, BUT INDICATED SOME DEGREE OF LINGERING CONCERN OVER RAMOS' POSITION. ONGPIN SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN PREPARED TO COME OUT WITH A STRONG STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR AQUINO BUT THAT THE PRESIDENT, AFTER HER MEETING WITH THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL HAD FELT THIS WAS NOT NECESSARY. HE STRESSED THAT THE POSITION OF RAMOS, "THE MAN IN THE MIDDLE" WAS CRUCIAL.

5. MONJO NOTED THAT ONE ELEMENT OF OUR CONCERN IS THE HESITANCY OF BUSINESSMEN TO INVEST IN THE PHILIPPINES WHILE THE POLITICAL SITUATION REMAINS

UNCERTAIN. ONGPIN SAID THIS WAS VERY MUCH THE CASE. HE HAD SPENT MUCH OF HIS TIME IN NEW YORK TRYING TO

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EXPLAIN THE POLITICAL SITUATION TO WORRIED BANKERS.
HE ALSO RECOUNTED THE STORY OF AN AMERICAN FRIEND WHO
WAS ON THE POINT OF INVESTING SEVERAL MILLION DOLLARS
IN THE PHILIPPINES BUT HAS NOW DRAWN BACK UNTIL
THINGS CLARIFY.

6. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE BELIEVES THE AQUINO VISIT
TO JAPAN IS GOING VERY WELL AND THAT THE GOJ HAS MADE
A "DOWN PAYMENT" ON INCREASED ASSISTANCE. ONGPIN
AGREED FULLY, STATING THAT WITH PERHAPS AS MUCH AS US
ONE BILLION IN AID, OF WHICH ONE HUNDRED MILLION
GRANT AND THE REMAINDER CREDITS, JAPAN WILL BE THE
PHILIPPINES NUMBER ONE AID DONOR.

7. BEFORE THE MEETING CLOSED THE AMBASSADOR
ASKED AGAIN EXACTLY WHAT WE COULD DO TO MAKE
CLEAR OUR UNWAVERING SUPPORT OF THE AQUINO
GOVERNMENT. ONGPIN AND CONCEPCION REITERATED
THAT WE MUST CONTINUE TO MAKE OUR POSITION CLEAR
AT ALL LEVELS OF THE MILITARY-STARTING WITH
ENRILE AND RAMOS AND INCLUDING THE RAM
OFFICERS. WHEN ASKED WHAT IS ENRILE'S GOAL,
ONGPIN AND CONCEPCION OPINED THAT HE WANTS TO
ACHIEVE POWER, BUT EXPRESSED HOPE THAT HE WOULD
BE DISSUADED BY THE RECOGNITION HE DOES NOT HAVE
SUFFICIENT SUPPORT IN THE MILITARY. ONGPIN
SOUNDED A NOTE OF WARNING, HOWEVER, THAT A MAN
AS INSECURE AS ENRILE, "AFTER ALL HE WAS JAILOR

TO HALF THE CABINET" MIGHT MAKE A RASH MOVE.

8. THE PHILIPPINE GUESTS NOTED STEVE SOLARZ
RECENT STATEMENT OF SUPPORT WHICH HAD RECEIVED

MIXED REACTIONS IN MANILA AFTER SPOKESMAN
BENIGNO HAD SAID A COUP COULD ONLY TAKE PLACE IF

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IT HAD US SUPPORT. NONETHELESS THEY SAW MERIT
IN JUDICIOUS STATEMENTS BY SUCH IMPORTANT SENATE
FIGURES AS SENATOR LUGAR AND SENATOR GLENN (IF
AS EXPECTED THE LATTER BECOMES THE CHAIRMAN OF
THE EAST ASIA SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE SFRC).

9. WHEN SAYING GOODBYE AT THE CAR, ONGPIN AND
CONCEPCION STATED THEY HOPED VERY MUCH THAT
AMBASSADOR BOSWORTH WOULD SEE PRESIDENT AQUINO
SHORTLY AFTER HER RETURN. THEY IMPLIED THAT
THIS VISIT TOO WOULD SYMBOLIZE US SUPPORT FOR
HER GOVERNMENT.

10. DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO MANILA FOR
AMBASSADOR BOSWORTH.

MANSFIELD

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